

Natural Resources Commission Meeting

NRC Policy Committee on
Wildlife & Fisheries

June 13, 2013



NRC Policy Committee on Wildlife and Fisheries

- Fisheries Chief Update
- Fisheries Division Research and Assessment, 2013
- WLD Chief Update
- Hunting Regulations for Early Waterfowl Season Dates
- Estimates for the 2012 Deer Hunting Seasons
- Antler Point Restrictions Update
- Recommended Antlerless License Quotas
- Regulatory Changes to Benefit Hunters with Disabilities



Proposed Orders

- NRC – For Information
 - Renaming of Special Deer Hunts, Hunter Qualifications and Harvest Types, Ground Blinds and Hunters with Disabilities, Standing Vehicle Permits (WCO Amendment No. 10 of 2013)
 - Antlerless Deer License Quotas (WCO Amendment No. 11 of 2013)
 - Waterfowl Regulatory Update; Early Waterfowl Seasons Regulations (WCO Amendment No. 12 of 2013)
 - Designation of Game Species (WCO Amendment No. 13 of 2013)
 - Wolf Regulations as a Game Species (WCO Amendment No. 14 of 2013)



Proposed Orders

- NRC – For Action
 - Furbearer Regulations (WCO Amendment No. 7 of 2013)
 - DMU Boundaries; Open/Closed DMUs; Antlerless Limits (WCO Amendment No. 8 of 2013)
 - Northwest Lower Peninsula Antler Point Restriction (WCO Amendment No. 9 of 2013)



A photograph of a calm lake with a wooden dock extending into the water. A small blue and white boat is moored at the dock. The background shows a forested shoreline under a clear sky.

Fisheries Division Update

Department of Natural Resources

Jim Dexter, Chief
Fisheries Division
June 13, 2013



Fisheries



- Viral Hemorrhagic Septicemia (VHS)

- Walleye

- Musky





Questions or Comments?

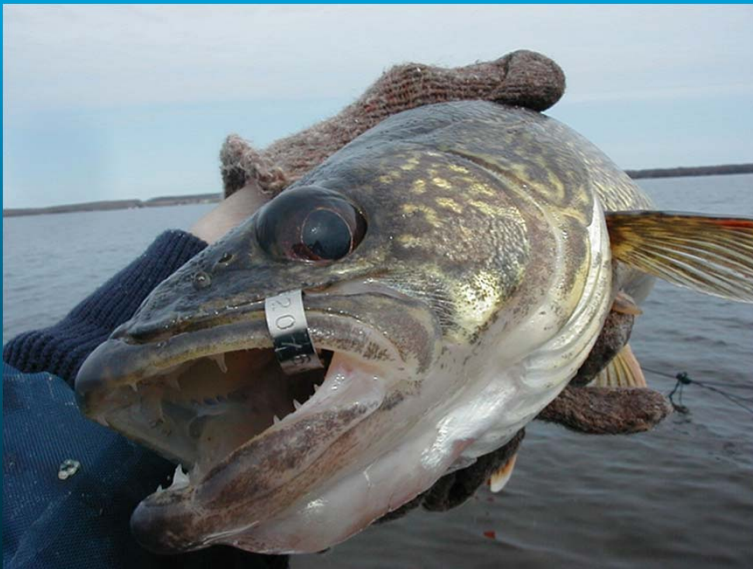
Fisheries Division Research and Assessment, 2013

Department of Natural Resources
David Clapp, Fish. Div., Research Section



Overview...

- Research Section role and support
- Specific projects and outcomes
- Future directions



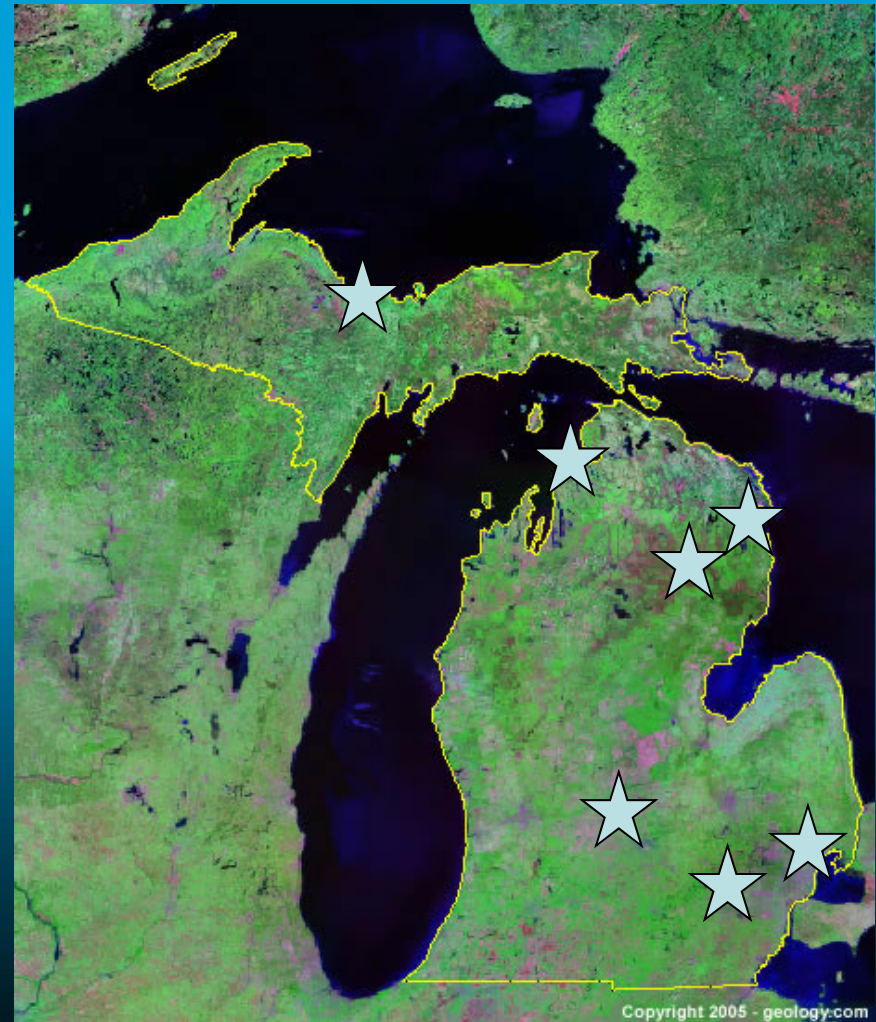
Research Section Mission

“...to provide information, models, and advice to make possible science-based management of Michigan's fishery resources.”

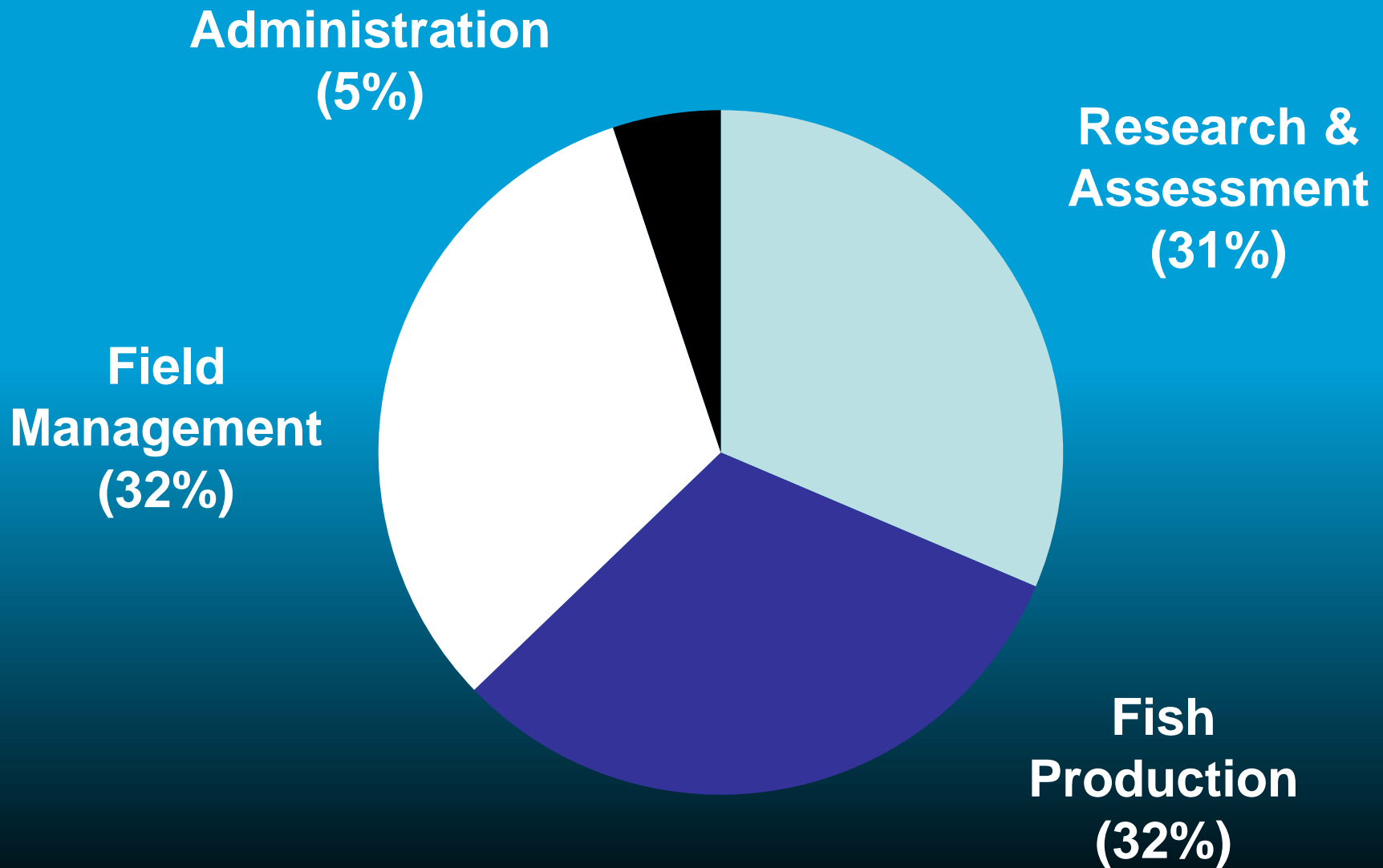


Fisheries Division Research Section

- 4 Great Lakes Stations, vessels
- 2 Inland Stations
- Partnership for Ecosystem Research and Management (MSU)
- Strong partnerships with other state universities



Fisheries Division Budget



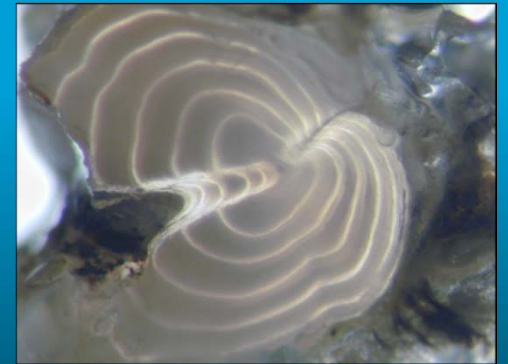
Research Section Funding Sources

- Federal Aid in Sportfish Restoration
- Game & Fish
- State Wildlife Grant
- EPA, GLRI
- GLFC, GLFT



Research Section Focus

- Long-term assessment & inventory
- Population assessment & allocations
- Regulation & stocking evaluations
- Tools & new techniques
- Emerging issues

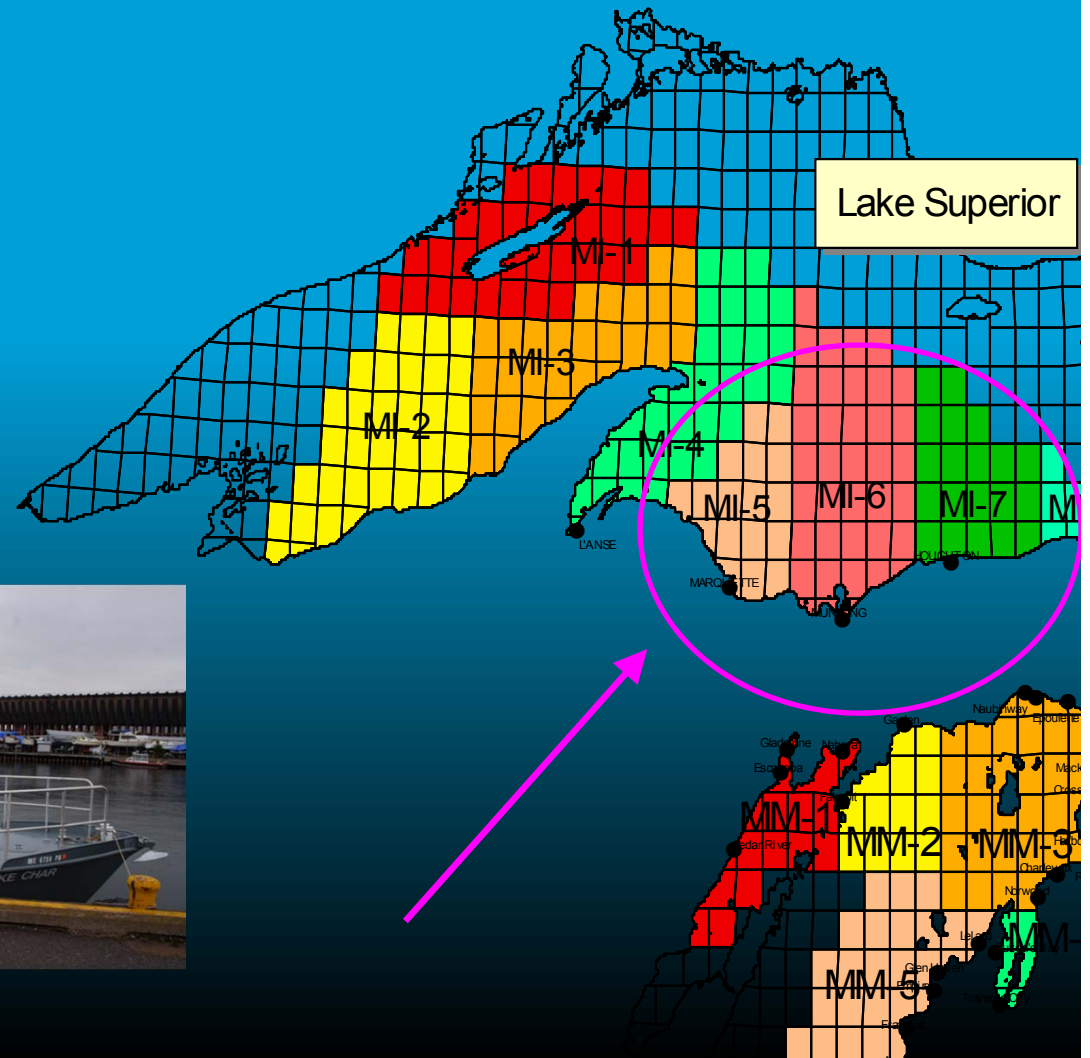


Research Section projects

- **Approximately 60 projects**
- **51% Great Lakes**
- **32% Inland**
- **17% statewide**
- **Some highlights include...**

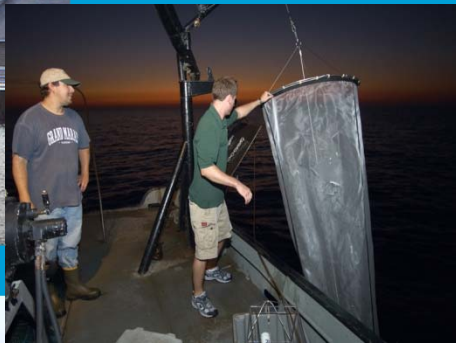
Lake Superior Lake Trout Assessment

Creel Data + Charter Data + Assessment Data = annual lake trout quotas in 1836 Consent Waters



Lake Michigan

Forage Fish Survey, Salmonid Management

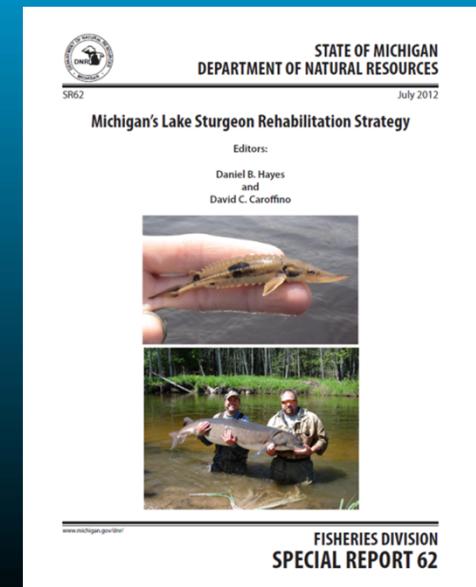


Lake Huron / Lake St. Clair / Lake Erie Walleye Assessments

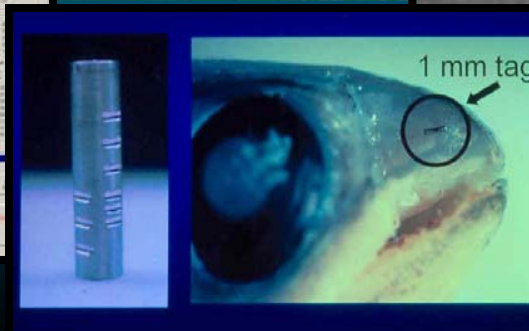
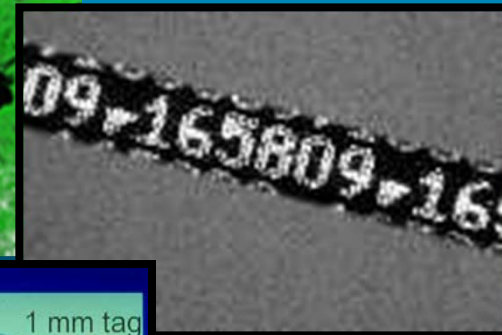
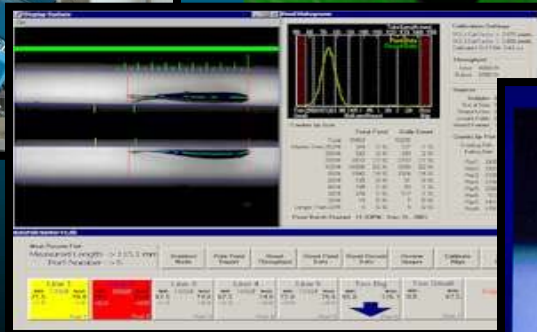
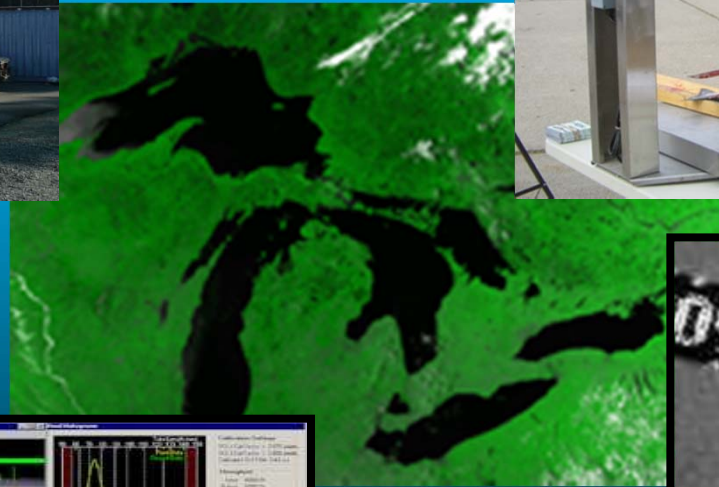


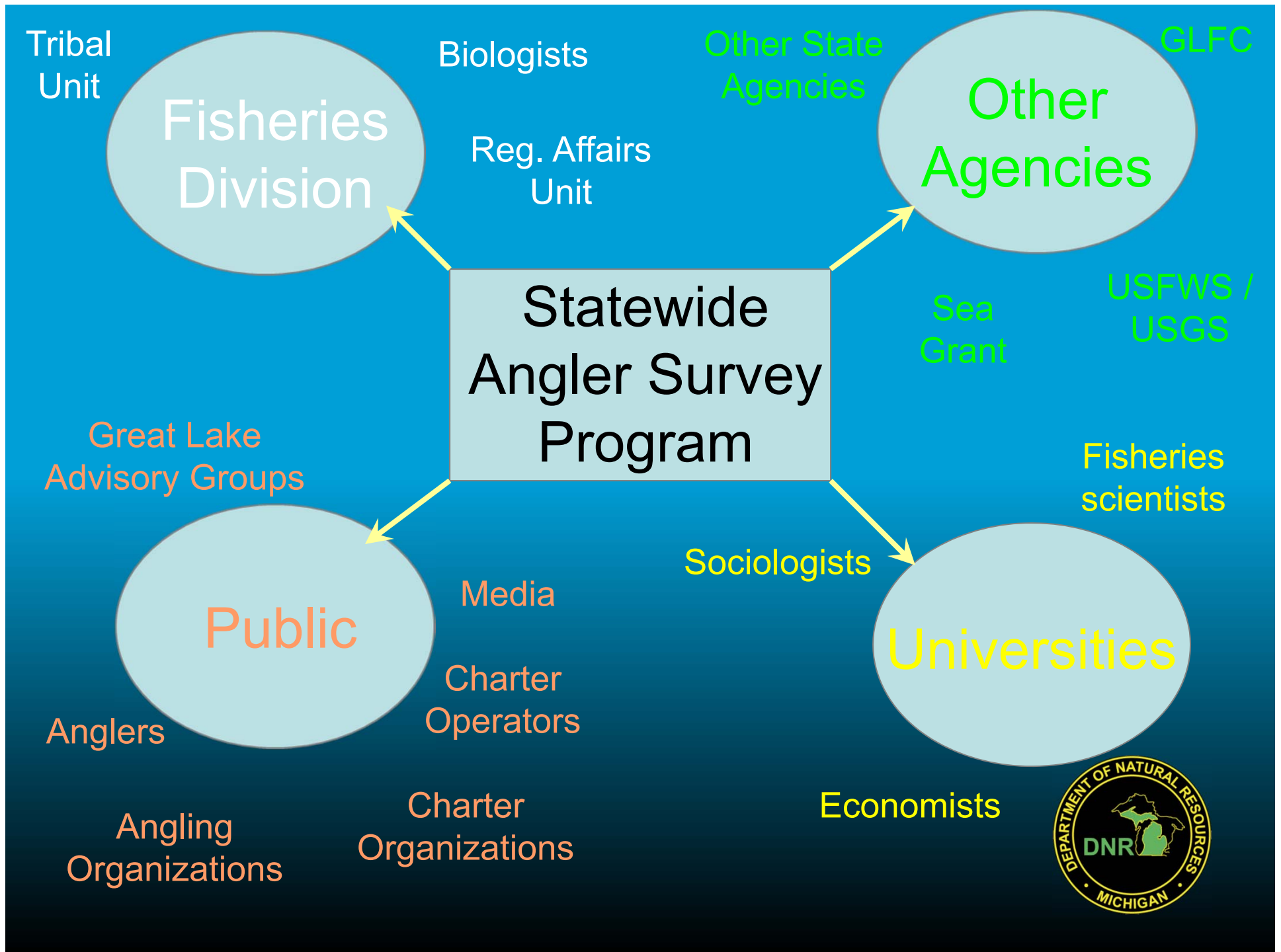
Lake Sturgeon

Assessment, Research, & Rehabilitation



Mass Marking of Stocked Fish (Great Lakes basin-wide)





Management Application of Creel Survey Data

- Stocking success
- Harvest limits
- Regulation evaluation





Lake and Stream Status & Trends Programs

Research Program Summary

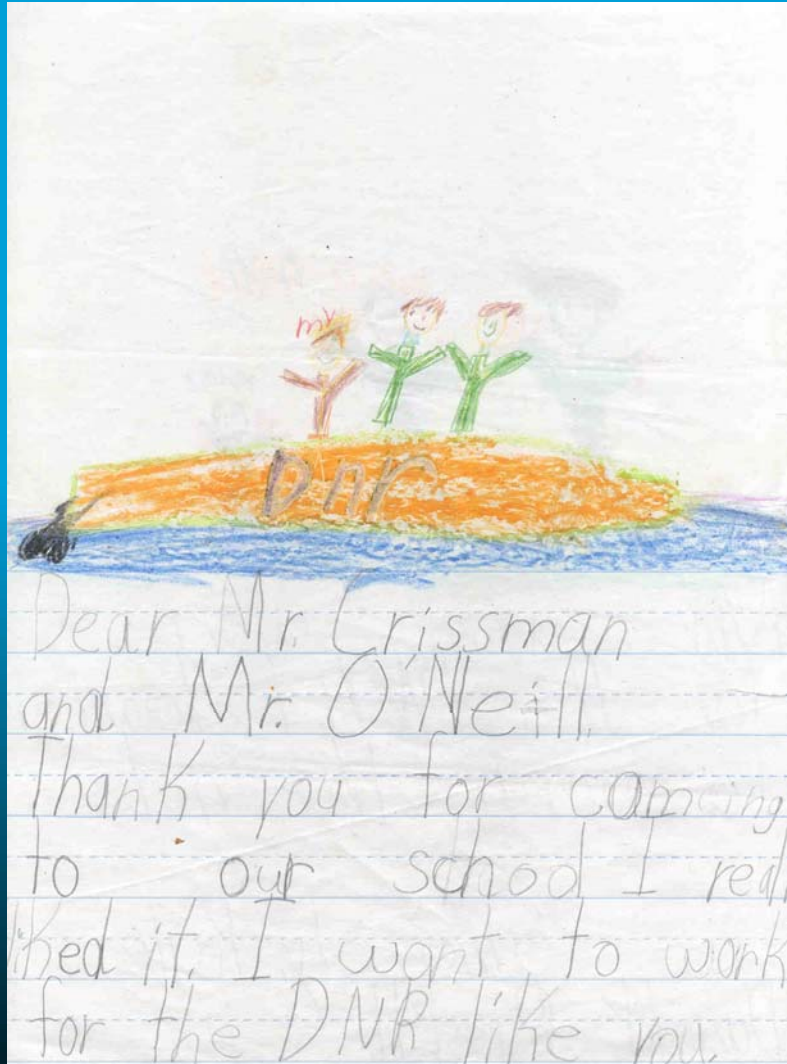
- Rich history
- Nationally and internationally recognized
- Significant investment in long term monitoring and assessment
- Addresses important management needs



The future...

- Restore / expand inland assessment
- Statewide Angler Survey Program review
- Improved collaboration and enhanced use of field stations
- Modernize Great Lakes vessels
- Continue improvements to communication and publication

Thank you



Wildlife Division Update



**Russ Mason, Chief
Wildlife Division
May 9, 2013**



Game Species Update

- Public Act 21 of 2013

[Referendum on PA 520 of 2012 suspended status of wolf as game animal and WCO Amendment No. 6 of 2013]

- Granted NRC shared authority to designate species as game

- Designation of Game Species (WCO Amendment No. 13 of 2013)
- Wolf Regulations as a Game Species (WCO Amendment No. 14 of 2013)
 - Modification from No. 6 of 2013
 - Trapping by permit only on case-by-case basis



Recognition

- Erik Eklund
 - Assistant Chief
 - Finance & Operations Division, DNR



Thank You

www.michigan.gov/wildlife



Hunting Regulations for Early Waterfowl Season Dates



Barbara Avers, Waterfowl and Wetland Specialist
Wildlife Division
June 13, 2013



Regulations Schedule

Early Seasons

- February/March
 - Mississippi Flyway Council
 - Citizen's Waterfowl Advisory Committee (CWAC)
- June
 - Regulations for information at NRC
 - USFWS Regulations Committee
 - Set early season framework
- July
 - Regulations for action at NRC Meeting
 - Early Season Selections Due to USFWS

Late Seasons

- July
 - Regulations for information at NRC
 - Mississippi Flyway Council
 - USFWS Regulations Committee
 - Set late season framework
- August
 - CWAC Meeting
 - Regulations for action at NRC
 - Late Season Selections Due to USFWS



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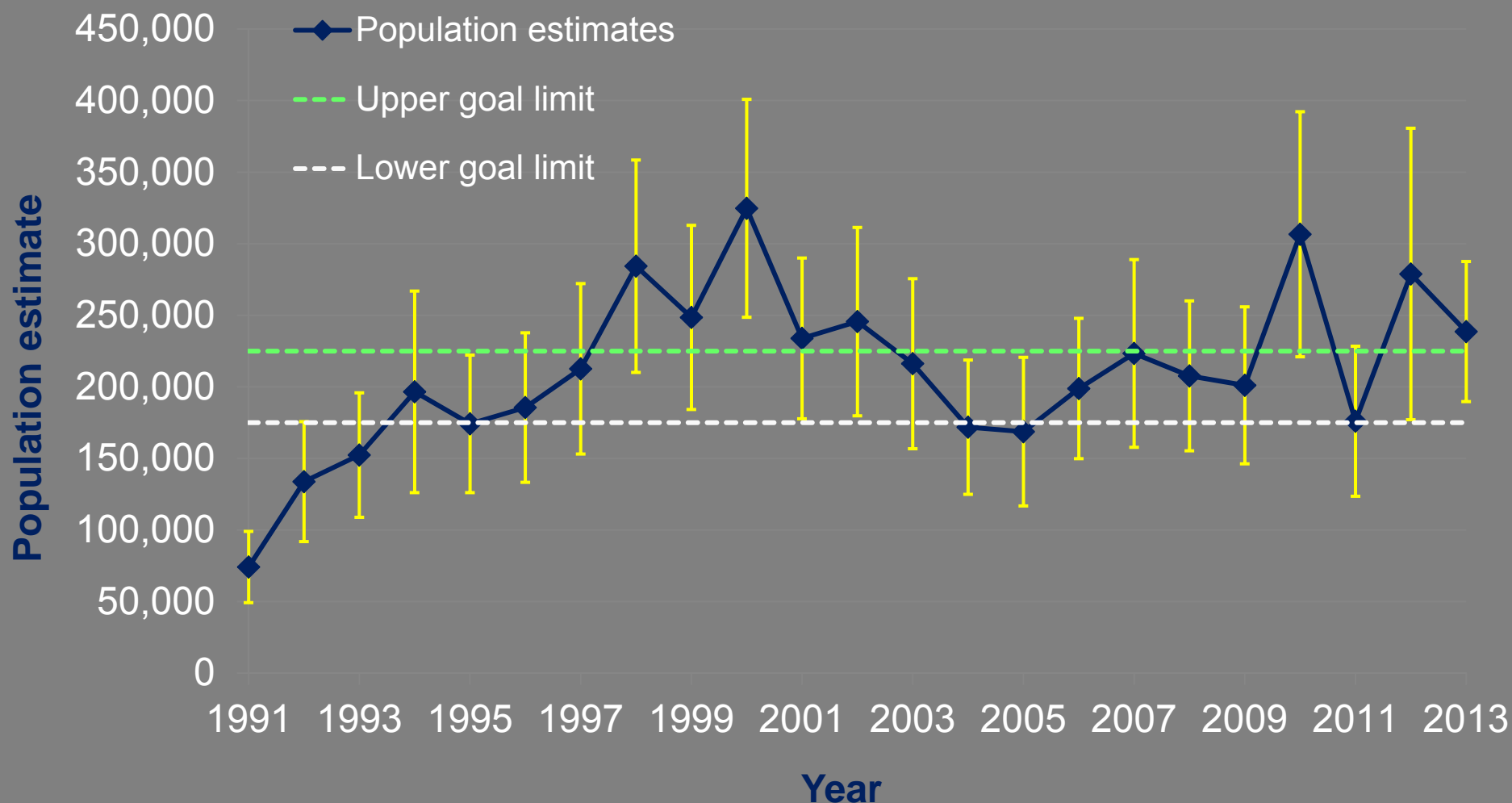


Common Moorhen

- Proposed Earlier Season
 - September 1 to November 9



Michigan Canada Goose Population Estimates, 1991-2013



Early Canada Goose Season

- No Change Proposed
 - September 1-10 (UP, Saginaw, Tuscola, and Huron Counties)
 - September 1-15 (NLP and SLP)
 - Daily bag limit of 5



UP Regular Canada Goose Season Opener

- Proposed opener in Upper Peninsula
 - September 11
 - Recommendation is earliest date under federal frameworks



Youth Waterfowl Season

- Proposed Date Change
 - 2nd weekend in September
 - Sept. 14 & 15, 2013



Thank You



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Estimates for the 2012 Deer Hunting Seasons



Brent Rudolph and Brian Frawley
Wildlife Division
June 13, 2013

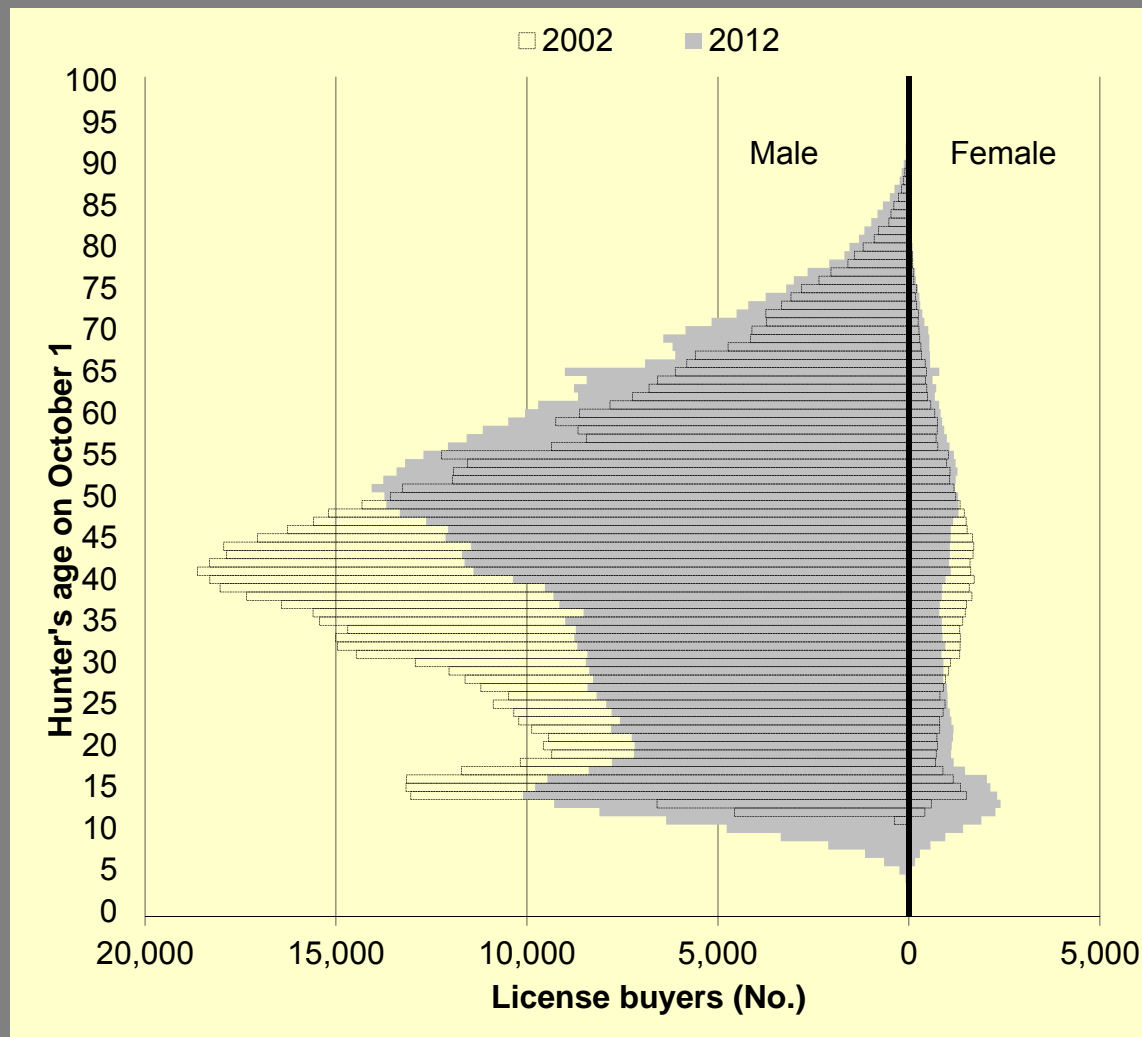


Number of Michigan Deer Harvest Tags Purchased, 2010-2012

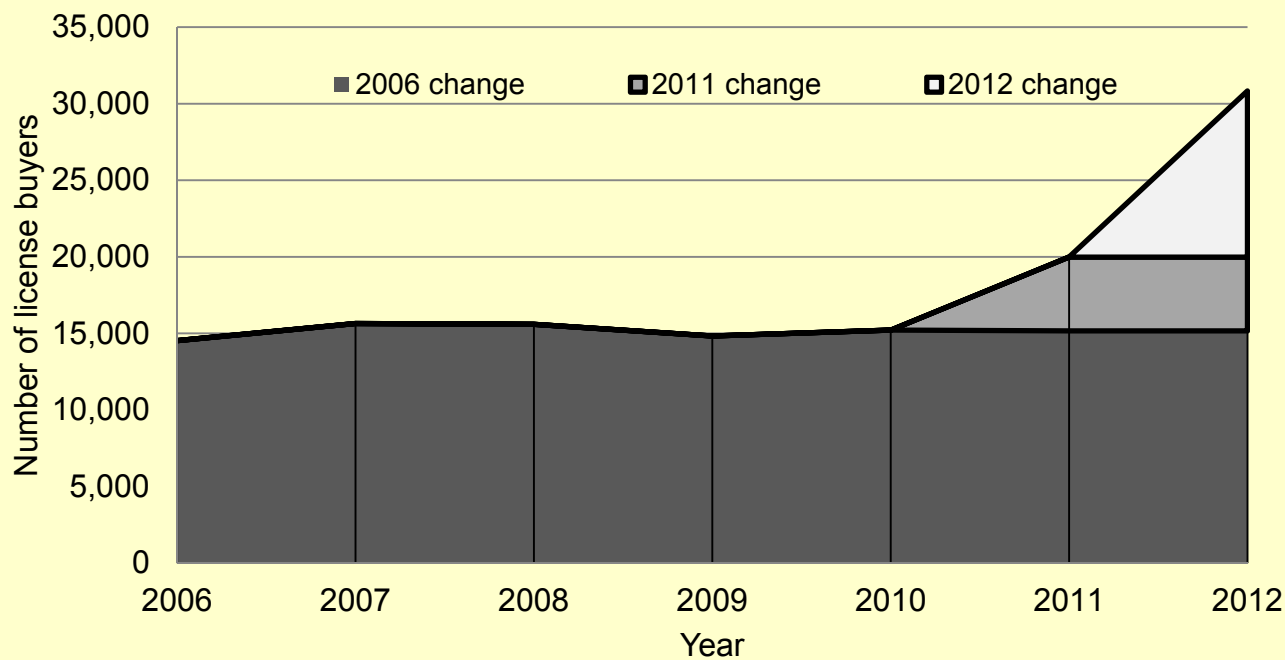
Harvest Tags	Number purchased			Change (%) 2011 to 2012
	2010	2011	2012	
Firearm	268,101	264,946	264,755	0%
Archery	54,028	55,559	57,202	3%
Combination	741,180	738,670	746,000	1%
Antlerless	480,027	462,343	434,156	-6%
Mentored Youth	NA	NA	20,722	NA
Total Harvest Tags	1,543,336	1,521,518	1,522,835	0%



Number of deer hunting license buyers in Michigan by age and sex during 2002 and 2012 hunting seasons. Deer hunting licenses were purchased by 788,271 people in 2002 and 701,001 people in 2012 (11% decline).



Changes in number of youth deer hunting license buyers following lowering the minimum age requirement during 2006-2012.

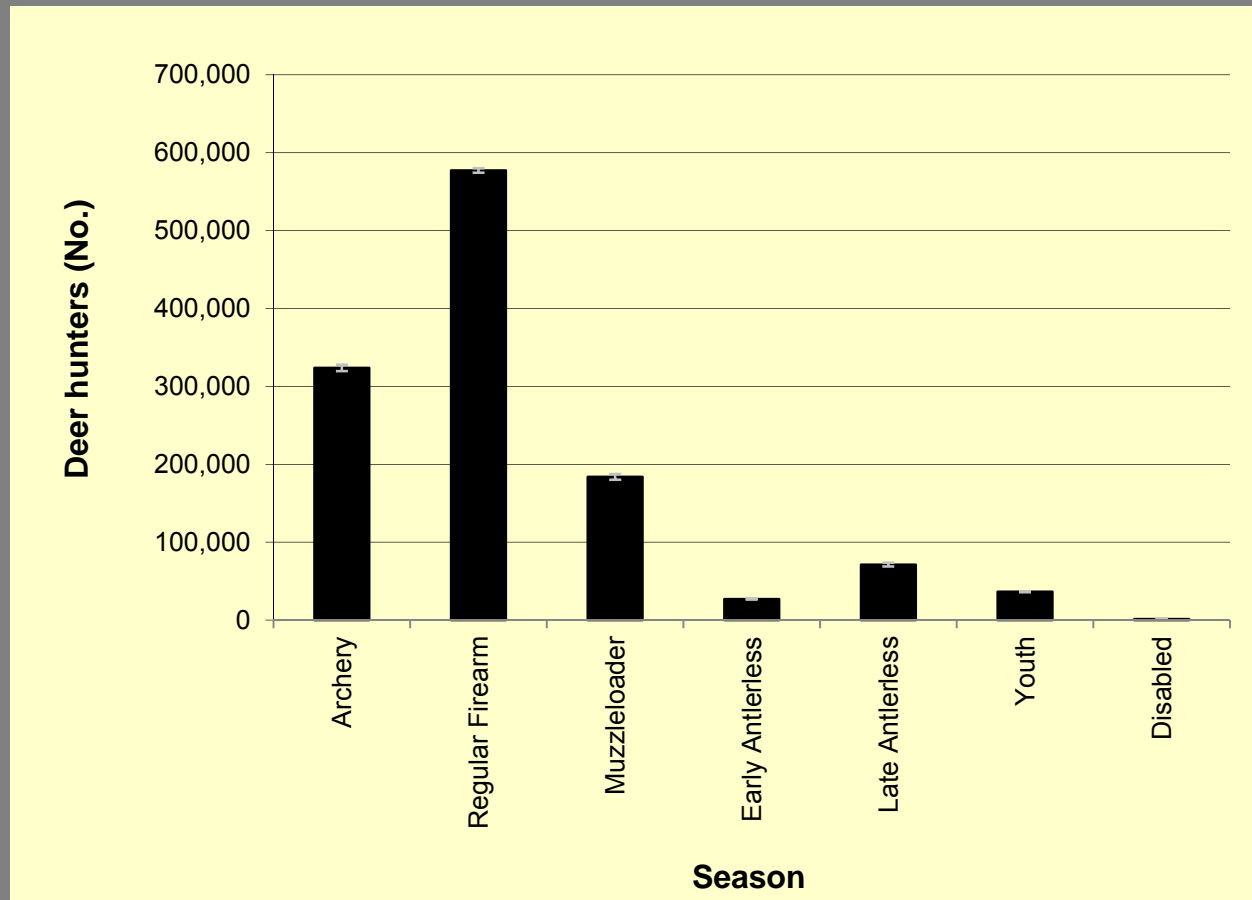


2012 Deer Harvest Survey

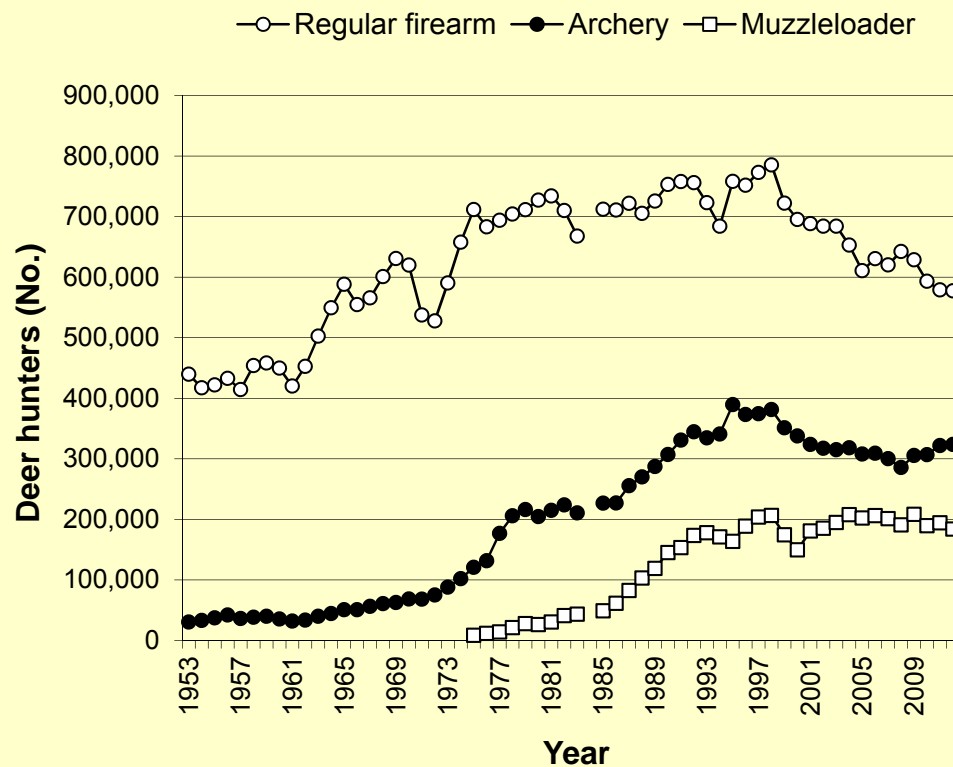
- 701,001 people purchased a license
- 3,256 people provided answers via the Internet
- Questionnaires delivered to 55,046 deer license holders
- 53% responded (28,488 people)
- Estimates standardized to be comparable with estimates from previous years



Estimated Number of People Hunting Deer in Michigan, Summarized by Season



Estimated Number of People Hunting Deer in Michigan, Long-term Trends (1953-2012)



- The numbers of people hunting in the archery and regular firearm seasons were nearly unchanged.
- Significantly fewer people hunted during muzzleloader season (-5%).



Estimated Number of People Hunting Deer During All Seasons, 2010-2012, Summarized by Region

Region	Number of hunters			Change (%) Between 2011 and 2012
	2010	2011	2012	
Statewide	656,501	648,127	650,914	0.4%

*Statistically significant change.



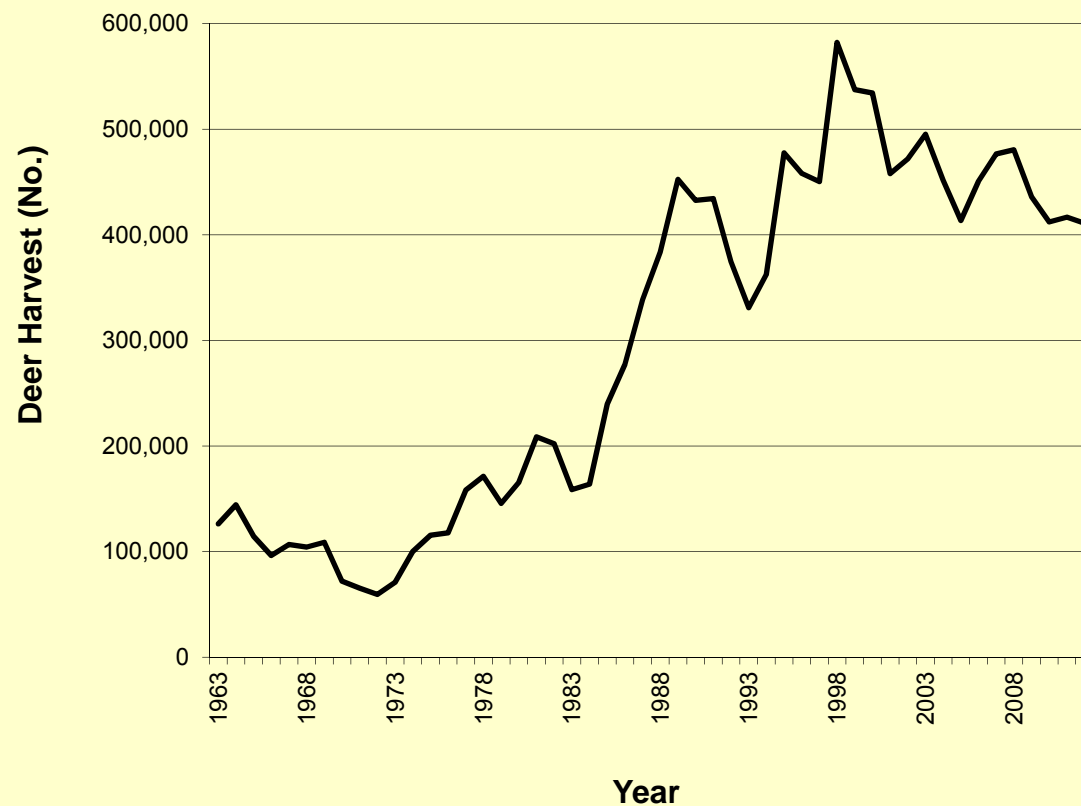
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Region	Number of hunters			Change (%) Between 2011 and 2012
	2010	2011	2012	
Statewide	656,501	648,127	650,914	0.4%
Upper Peninsula (UP)	103,729	97,971	99,764	1.8%
Northern Lower Peninsula (NLP)	274,687	271,567	283,766	4.5%*
Southern Lower Peninsula (SLP)	353,269	346,439	338,775	-2.2%*

*Statistically significant change.



Estimated Number of Deer Harvested in Michigan, Long-term Trends (1963-2012)



Estimated Number of Deer Harvested in Michigan, 2010-2012, Summarized by Season & Type of Deer

Season or permit	Type of deer	2010	2011	2012	Change from 2011 to 2012
All Seasons	Antlerless	205,509	209,481	194,169	-7%*
	Antlered bucks	212,341	212,791	220,862	4%

^aDeer Management Assistance (DMA) permits. These permits could be used during any deer hunting season.

*Statistically significant change.



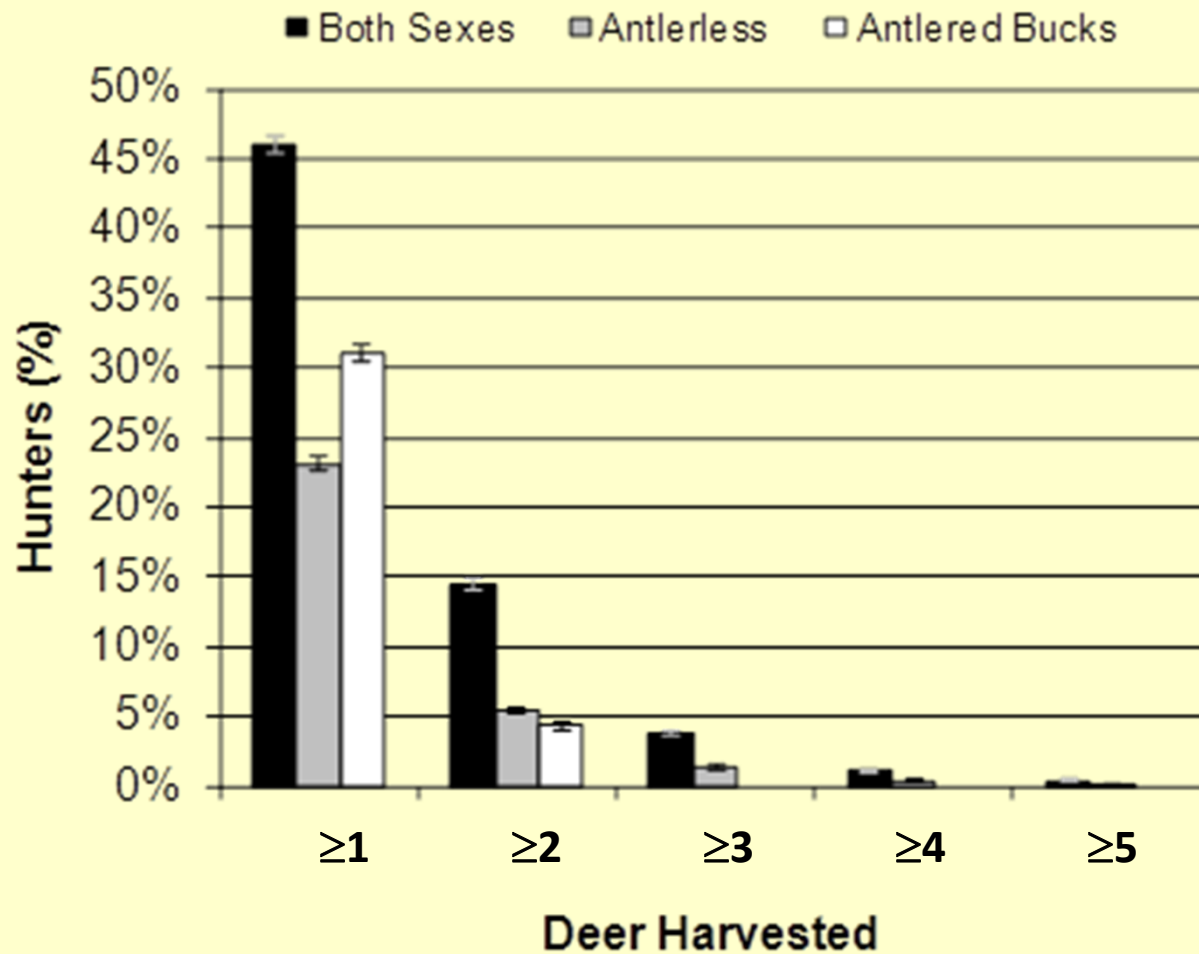
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All Seasons	Antlerless	205,509	209,481	194,169	-7%*
	Antlered bucks	212,341	212,791	220,862	4%
Archery	Antlerless	51,309	61,466	58,552	-5%
	Antlered bucks	65,871	70,148	67,836	-3%
Regular firearm	Antlerless	90,927	86,697	85,218	-2%
	Antlered bucks	129,376	127,070	136,045	7%*
Muzzleloader	Antlerless	26,627	23,838	17,890	-25%*
	Antlered bucks	12,348	10,418	9,024	-13%
Early antlerless	Antlerless	8,423	10,892	6,001	-45%*
Late antlerless	Antlerless	18,957	17,345	17,498	1%
Youth	Antlerless	2,748	2,736	4,840	77%*
	Antlered bucks	4,557	4,634	7,838	69%*
DMA permits ^a	Antlerless	5,551	5,293	4,008	-24%

^aDeer Management Assistance (DMA) permits. These permits could be used during any deer hunting season.

*Statistically significant change.

Estimated Percentage of Hunters Harvesting a Deer in Michigan



Estimated Hunter Success During Michigan Deer Hunting Seasons, Summarized by Hunting Season, 2010-2012

Season	Hunter success (%)			Difference between 2011 and 2012
	2010	2011	2012	
Archery	32	34	33	-1*
Regular firearm	32	32	34	2*
Muzzleloader	19	16	14	-2*
Early firearm	26	29	21	-8*
Late firearm	25	19	22	3*
Youth	32	32	36	4*
All seasons	44	45	46	1

*Statistically significant change.



Estimated Hunter Success During the Michigan Deer Hunting Seasons, Summarized by Region, 2010-2012

Region	Hunter success (%)			Difference between 2011 and 2012
	2010	2011	2012	
Statewide	44	45	46	1

*Statistically significant change.



Estimated Hunter Success During the Michigan Deer Hunting Seasons, Summarized by Region, 2010-2012

Region	Hunter success (%)			Difference between 2011 and 2012
	2010	2011	2012	
Statewide	44	45	46	1
Upper Peninsula	36	38	42	4*
Northern Lower Peninsula	33	38	40	2*
Southern Lower Peninsula	47	46	45	-1

*Statistically significant change.



Proportion of hunters satisfied with the number of deer seen, deer harvested, and their overall deer hunting experience, 2011-2012

Satisfaction variable	2011	2012	Difference between 2011 and 2012
Number of deer seen	33	35	2%*
Number of antlered deer (bucks) seen	21	24	2%*
Overall deer hunting experience	44	45	1%*
Number of deer harvested	30	30	0%

*Statistically significant change.



Estimated Proportion of Hunters Supporting the Antler Point Restrictions In the UP, Summarized by Hunt Area

Preferred Hunt Area	Level of support (%)		
	Support	Oppose	Not sure
Statewide	52	18	25
Upper Peninsula	56	29	11
Northern Lower Peninsula	50	19	27
Southern Lower Peninsula	53	14	29



Estimated Proportion of Hunters Supporting the Antler Point Restrictions In DMU 487, Summarized by Hunt Area

Preferred Hunt Area	Level of support (%)		
	Support	Oppose	Not sure
Statewide	42	17	35
Upper Peninsula	35	18	43
Northern Lower Peninsula	45	20	30
Southern Lower Peninsula	44	14	38



Estimated numbers of archers using a crossbow, hunter success, and deer harvested with a crossbow during 2012 archery season, summarized by region.

Region	Archers using crossbow		Hunter success	Deer harvested
	%	Total		
Statewide	44	141,827	36	59,409



Estimated numbers of archers using a crossbow, hunter success, and deer harvested with a crossbow during 2012 archery season, summarized by region.

Region	Archers using crossbow		Hunter success	Deer harvested
	%	Total		
Statewide	44	141,827	36	59,409
Upper Peninsula	46	11,734	38	4,527
Northern Lower Peninsula	47	48,447	39	20,876
Southern Lower Peninsula	42	69,263	34	28,383
Unknown	44	12,384	38	5,622



Statewide Overview

- Greater number of license buyers (1%), although number of harvest tags sold was nearly unchanged
- Similar number of hunters went afield
- Similar hunting success (46%)
- Similar number of deer harvested
- Improved satisfaction with the number of deer seen, the number of bucks seen, and overall hunting experience, although satisfaction with harvest was unchanged



Statewide Overview

- 52% of hunters statewide and 56% of UP hunters supported UP buck harvest restrictions (similar to last year)
- 43% of hunters statewide and 46% of NLP hunters supported DMU 487 buck harvest restrictions (similar to last year)
- 44% of archers used a crossbow during the archery season, and they harvested 59,409 deer (archer using crossbows increased by 20% and their harvest increased by 8%)



Thank You



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Antler Point Restrictions Update



Brent Rudolph, Deer and Elk Program Leader
Wildlife Division
June 13, 2013



Current Buck Harvest Restrictions

- Statewide: When taking two bucks, at least one must have ≥ 4 points on one side
- Upper Peninsula and Deer Management Unit 487
 - “Hunters’ Choice”
 - Single buck with an archery OR firearm license
 - Two bucks (combination license): regular tag ≥ 3 points on one side, restricted tag ≥ 4 points on one side (same as elsewhere)
- DMU Antler Restrictions
 - UP: Drummond Island fork rule, DMU 122 (Norway) ≥ 3 points on one side
 - LP: South Fox Island and portion of Iosco County fork rule, Beaver Island and Leelanau ≥ 3 points on one side



Future Buck Harvest Restrictions

- Statewide: under any new license package, Department recommends retaining restriction when taking two bucks
- “Hunters’ Choice”
 - Upper Peninsula Deer Advisory Team is finalizing recommendations for 2014
 - Deer Management Unit 487 will be evaluated for Department recommendation in 2014
- Additional DMU Antler Restrictions
 - NW 12 Counties: recommended 2013 implementation
 - Lower Peninsula Deer Management Initiative Proposals: evaluation for 2014



Thank You



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Recommended Antlerless License Quotas



Brent Rudolph, Deer and Elk Program Leader
Wildlife Division
June 13, 2013



Natural Resources Commission Policy #2007

The Department's goal is to manage the deer herd using management practices based on scientific research to:

Maintain healthy animals and keep the deer population within limits dictated by the carrying capacity of the range and by its effect on native plant communities, agricultural, horticultural, and silvicultural crops and public safety.

Issued April 14, 1994



Recommendations Overview

- Upper Peninsula: Decrease quota 14%
 - Response to late winter 2012-2013 severe conditions
- Northern Lower Peninsula: Increase quota 19%
 - Greatest increases in the Northwest, where deer populations have slowly but steadily increased
- Southern Lower Peninsula: Decrease quota 32%
 - Allocate through smaller Deer Management Units to direct management to distinct areas on smaller scale
 - Private land licenses in some units could sell out



Recent Regional Harvest and Quotas

Upper Peninsula

	2011	2012	CHANGE
Buck Harvest	30,033	35,635	+18.7%*
Antlerless Harvest	13,355	13,313	-0.3%
Antlerless Quotas	24,800	27,150	+8.7%

* Statistically significant change.



Population Trend and Management Needs

Upper Peninsula

- Snow accumulation below average for 3 winters
- Increased 2012-2013 late winter severity
- Regionally, recommendations decrease:
 - Private land quota to 18,800 (21,250 in 2012)
 - Public land quota to 4,500 (5,900 in 2012)
- 6 of 22 DMUs would provide licenses for recreational opportunity and to address crop damage and forest regeneration concerns



Antlerless License Proposed Changes

Upper Peninsula

- Overall decrease of 2,450 private land and 1,400 public land antlerless licenses, spread over:
 - Menominee (DMU 055)
 - Gladstone (DMU 155)
 - Crystal Falls (DMU 022)
 - LaBranche (DMU 255)
- Closing to private/public land antlerless harvest:
 - Nissula (DMU 031)
 - Amasa/Michigamme (DMU 036)
 - Drummond Island (DMU 117)
 - Gwinn (DMU 152)
 - Rock (DMU 252)



Recent Regional Harvest and Quotas

Northern Lower Peninsula

	2011	2012	CHANGE
Buck Harvest	71,383	78,771	+10.3%*
Antlerless Harvest	60,703	66,680	+9.8%*
Antlerless Quotas	171,300	127,900	-25.0%

* Statistically significant change.



Population Trend and Management Needs

Northern Lower Peninsula

- Three mild winters and one moderate winter have led to increasing deer populations
- Regionally, recommendations increase:
 - Private land quota to 122,700 (97,000 in 2012)
 - Public land quota to 35,200 (30,900 in 2012)



Antlerless License Proposed Changes

Northern Lower Peninsula

- Private land antlerless quotas:
 - Recommend increases in 14 DMUs
 - Average increase < 250 licenses
- Public land antlerless quotas:
 - Recommend increases in 16 DMUs
 - Average increase < 100 licenses
- Most recommendations still lower than highest quotas from past decade



Recent Regional Harvest and Quotas

Southern Lower Peninsula

	2011	2012	CHANGE
Buck Harvest	111,374	106,456	-4.4%*
Antlerless Harvest	129,872	110,168	-15.2%*
Antlerless Quotas	560,100	553,600	-1.2%

* Statistically significant change.



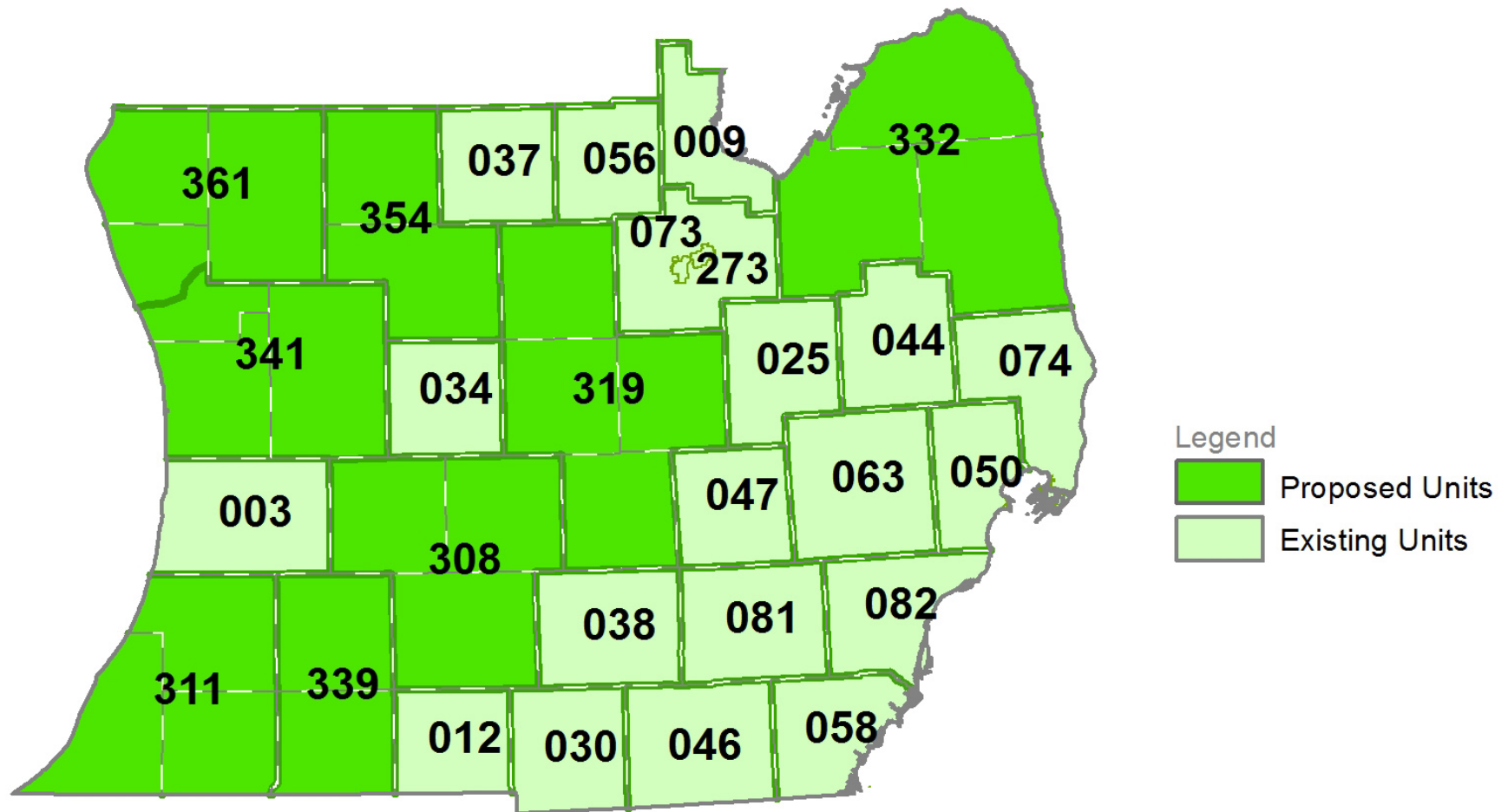
Antlerless License Proposed Changes

Southern Lower Peninsula

- Decreased or stabilized deer population trends over past decade
- Repeated EHD outbreaks (widespread in 2012)
- Recommend directing management efforts to distinct areas on smaller scale
- Regionally, recommendations reduce:
 - Private land quota to 345,500 (519,650 in 2012)
 - Public land quota to 30,150 (33,950 in 2012)



Recommended New DMUs



Recommendations Review

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 - Response to late winter 2012-2013 severe conditions
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 - Private land licenses in some units could sell out



Thank You



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Recommended Regulatory Changes to Benefit Hunters with Disabilities



Lt. Creig Grey, Employment and Training Section Supervisor
Law Enforcement Division
June 13, 2013



Changes to Hunt Names

- Proposed name changes:
 - 100% Disabled Veteran Firearm Deer Hunting Days
 - Recommendation: *Liberty Hunt*
 - No date change: September 21 – 22, 2013
 - Special Firearm Disabled Hunter Deer Hunting Days
 - Recommendation: *Independence Hunt*
 - No Date Change: October 17 – 20, 2013



Hunt Qualifications and Harvest Type

- Recommend aligning Independence Hunt with the Liberty Hunt to allow for the harvest of either sex deer
 - Increase hunter success, eliminate confusion
- Recommend increasing opportunity during Liberty Hunt by allowing participation from hunters:
 - Who are blind
 - Possess a permit to hunt using a laser sighting device
 - Possess a permit to hunt from standing vehicle



Permit to take Game from a Standing Vehicle

- Recommendation to improve permitting process:
 - Form completed by medical care provider
 - Licensed physician, licensed physical therapist, occupational therapist
 - No expiration date
- Quicker processing, mail-in forms, no interview requirement



Ground Blinds

- Current qualifications include:
 - Permit to hunt from a standing vehicle,
Secretary of State disabled parking permit
Meet the disability standard in the Michigan
Off-Road Vehicle Law
- Recommendation to add hunters with a
disability crossbow permit



Thank You



www.michigan.gov/hunting

